MIDDLE EAST & SOUTH ASIA REVIEW

28 MARCH 1985

Iran-Iraq War

Iraqi military spokesmen, in statements broadcast by Voice of the Masses radio, announced that Iraqi planes raided Ilam, Salehabad, Estahan, Tabriz, Baneh, and Marivan the morning of 28 March after strikes against Tehran, Qazvin, and Kashan late on 27 March. IRNA reported over 200 casualties as a result of the Iraqi attack on residential areas in southeastern Tehran the night of 27 March. In response to the Iraqi air raids Iranian artillery units shelled Basra and other southern Iraqi border towns on 27 March, according to Tehran radio. Meanwhile, Damascus "sources" cited by IRNA asserted that 130 Iraqi military personnel were killed in the 25 March Iranian missile attack against Baghdad.

In an interview with the newspaper *TEHRAN TIMES*, reported by IRNA, an Iranian Foreign Ministry official said Iran's demands for ending the war are: The "elimination" of the Iraqi regime; 350 billion dollars in war reparations; and the return of 200,000 Iraqi "refugees" to Iraq. The official noted that the earlier demand that Iraq vacate occupied Iranian territory has been omitted.

Sudan

Khartoum Demonstrations — Three were killed and an "undetermined number" were wounded when police opened fire during "violent demonstrations" in central Khartoum on 27 March, according to AFP reports. The demonstrations followed President Ja'far Numayri's departure for an official visit to the United States, the agency noted. Muslim Brotherhood "infiltrators" played a role in organizing the groups of students that staged the "small demonstration" and police were "forced to intervene" when the "infiltrated elements" started attacking public and private property, SUNA asserted. Later the agency reported that the situation in Khartoum was "completely calm" and that Omdurman's Islamic University was closed until July.

National Unity Call — At the first meeting of the Higher National Peace Committee, the committee's chairman called on the "brother outlaws" to adopt the principle of dialogue in the interest of national unity, SUNA related. Numayri's decision to form the committee showed his determination to settle differences among Sudanese citizens, the peace committee chairman stated. However, a Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA) radio commentator reiterated that the SPLA is not interested in talking to Numayri's "decaying regime." Describing the peace committee as a "panic committee," SPLA officers cited by the radio maintained that recognizing the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement's (SPLM) political power, opposition parties have begun "secret talks" with the SPLM.

Lebanon

Gordon Nash, the British metallurgist kidnapped in Beirut on 14 March, was released on the night of 26-27 March, the British Foreign Office disclosed in a statement reported by AFP. Another kidnapped Briton, UNRWA employee Alec Colett, will be released soon, according to a UN official cited by the clandestine Radio Free Lebanon. Meanwhile, a UN spokesman announced the United Nations' decision to withdraw all its nonessential employees from Lebanon, Voice of Lebanon radio noted.

Syria

Prime Minister 'Abd al-Ra'uf al-Kasm has been authorized to form a new government, according to a source in Damascus cited by Radio Monte Carlo.

Afghanistan

A 23 March bomb attack on a Soviet convoy near the Salang Pass caused "hundreds" of Soviet casualties as the blast detonated a chain reaction among ammunition trucks, Panjsher Valley mujahidin commander Ahmad Shah Masud claimed in a message cited by AFP.

FBIS

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Defense Minister on Producing Combat Aircraft

BK271357 Delhi General Overseas Service in English 1330 GMT 27 Mar 85

[Text] The defense minister, Mr Narasimha Rao, has said that the light combat aircraft will be produced as scheduled. It is being developed by the Hindustan Aeronautics Limited, Bangalore, in the southern State of Karnataka.

Answering questions in the upper house of Parliament — Rajya Sabha — today, Mr Rao said that the first prototype of the aircraft is expected to be flown in 1989. It is being designed under Indian expertise and import components are marginal.

The defense minister said that the aircraft will meet the defense needs in the next decade.

Rao Speaks to Soldiers on Country's Defense

BK280914 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 28 Mar 85

[Text] The defense minister, Mr Narasimha Rao, has said that India does not want to attack any country, but at the same time it has to be fully prepared to defend itself against any eventuality. He was addressing officers and jawans [soldiers] of the Army near Chandigarh this morning. Referring to the escalating tension in our neighborhood, particularly in the south and the west, he said we are totally against tension and want to live in peace. Assuring the troops the wholehearted support of the country, he asked them to always keep themselves prepared without any fear or worry on any count.

Later, talking to newsmen, the defense minister said the time of the visit of the Cabinet subcommittee to Punjab will be fixed within a day or so. He said during their visit to Punjab they will meet a cross-section of the people to find out their views and hold discussions on various issues. In reply to a question regarding the alleged spurt in the infiltration of terrorists from across the border, Mr Narasimha Rao said we are vigilant against such things.

Chavan on 'Infiltrators' at Bangladesh Border

BK280804 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0730 GMT 28 Mar 85

[Text] The home minister, Mr Chavan, assured the Rajya Sabha today that every effort is being made by the BSF [Border Security Force] and other security agencies to push back the infiltrators from Bangladesh trying to cross over into Indian territory. Replying to supplementaries during question hour, the minister said the infiltrators will be sent back. There is no question of granting citizenship to them.

Mr Chavan said the total length of Indo-Bangladesh border of about 3,200 km is to be fenced. So far the work relating to survey and casting of pillars has been taken up. The actual fencing work could not commence because of objections from the Bangladesh Government and firing on our personnel by Bangladesh Rifles. The minister said the matter regarding resumption of fencing work will be taken up by the foreign secretary with Bangladesh authorities when he visits Dhaka next month.

Parliament Passes Bill on Union Carbide Suit

BK271621 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 27 Mar 85

[Text] The Parliament has passed a bill to empower the central government to represent the victims of the Bhopal gas tragedy in the matter of the compensation claim. The Lok Sabha today passed a bill which replaces an ordinance promulgated last month. The Rajya Sabha had approved it last week. A resolution seeking to disapprove of the ordinance, moved by Mr Ranga Reddy, BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party], was withdrawn.

Replying to the discussion, the minister for chemicals and fertilizers, Mr Virendra Patil, said the government will soon decide about filing a suit in an American court against the Union Carbide for compensation for the victims of the tragedy. He said a draft complaint has already been prepared. Four representatives of the U.S. attorneys firm, who have arrived in India, will finalize the complaint.

Mr Patil disclosed that a scheme has been prepared to care for the people who have been affected and also those who are likely to suffer in the future as a result of the long-term effects of the gas leakage.

The minister informed the house that the Madhya Pradesh chief minister has written to the prime minister suggesting nationalization of the Bhopal unit. Mr Patil said it is under consideration, and the center will take a decision which is in the best interest of the country.

Earlier, moving the resolution, Mr Ranga Reddy said the bill is inadequate as it does not provide for prevention of similar disaster elsewhere.

Science Minister on Nuclear Reactor Capability

BK270806 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0730 GMT 27 Mar 85

[Text] The Lok Sabha was told today that India is one of the few countries which can indigenously design, construct and operate nuclear reactors without relying on external inputs. In a written reply, the minister of state for science and technology, Mr Shiv Raj Patil, said the government has progressively increased the indigenous contents of nuclear power reactors constructed in the country. India is also in a position to meet its need for nuclear fuel from indigenous sources.

Rajya Sabha Debates PRC Submarine Deployment

BK280908 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0730 GMT 28 Mar 85

[Text] The reported deployment of China's nuclear submarines in the Indian Ocean and the Arabian Sea was highlighted by several members during question time in the Rajya Sabha today.

They expressed concern over this development. The minister of state for external affairs, Mr K.A. Khan, said [words indistinct] that India had no confirmation so far. It has always protested against the presence of the superpowers in the Indian Ocean and continues to maintain a constant vigil over the induction by outside naval forces in the area. Our defense plans are upgraded from time to time to meet the emerging situation. When a member suggested an increase in the allocation for the Navy, the prime minister, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, said that he would definitely consider the suggestion.

Oil Exploration Protocol Signed With USSR

BK270554 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 27 Mar 85

[Text] India and the Soviet Union are to enlarge their cooperation in oil exploration. A protocol signed in New Delhi yesterday proposes to give to the Soviets some mutually agreed area [word indistinct] for intensive integrated exploration. The area would be finalized within a month.

The two sides also reviewed the progress of the Indo-Soviet cooperation in oil exploration and the work of exploratory drilling in (Bojra) in West Bengal.

Punjab Governor Reviews Cases of 800 Detainees

BK271623 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 27 Mar 85

[Text] In Punjab, cases of nearly 800 people, detained under the National Security Act, are under review, and the process will be completed within the next few days. The information was given by the governor, Mr Arjun Singh, to newsmen in Chandigarh today. He also disclosed that a committee of senior secretaries has been set up to look into the issues affecting the industrial development in the state.

Tamil Refugees Exceed 85,600 in Tamil Nadu

BK270808 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0730 GMT 27 Mar 85

[Text] The Lok Sabha was informed that over 85,600 refugees have arrived in India from Sri Lanka since the eruption of ethnic violence in that country in July 1983. In a written reply, the minister of state for home, Mrs Ram Dulari Sinha, said that no rehabilitation assistance was being provided to the refugees, but the Tamil Nadu government is providing relief facilities to those who have sought assistance.

AFGHANISTAN

Bomb Hits Soviet Convoy, Casualties 'Very Heavy'

NC280938 Paris AFP in English 0935 GMT 28 Mar 85

[Text] Islamabad, March 28 (AFP) — Soviet troops suffered "very heavy casualties" when a massive bomb explosion hit 80 vehicles of a large military convoy heading towards northern Salang Pass over the weekend, Afghan resistance leaders reported today.

Quoting a message from Commander Ahmad Shah Masud, a Jami'at-e Eslami party spokesman here said 250 armoured vehicles and tanks were parked at Ollang, about five kms (three miles) south of the Salang tunnel in preparation for an operation in the north.

He said that mujahidin planted a time bomb in one of the trucks and the blast Saturday set off a chain of explosions when a huge fire engulfed more than eighty trucks loaded with ammunition, explosives and bombs.

Quoting Mr. Masud, the spokesman said Soviet casualties were thought to run in "hundreds", a large part of the convoy was crippled and the Salang highway linking the Soviet Union with Afghanistan was closed. There was no immediate independent confirmation of the bombing, with Western diplomatic sources reporting no knowledge. However diplomats had told newsmen here yesterday that the Soviets were plugging guerrilla routs north, in apparent preparation for a new assault on Mr. Masud's Panjsher Valley stronghold in the middle of next month.

Cotton, Wheat Growing, Land Distribution Reviewed

LD270214 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 26 Mar 85

[Text] An area of 20,500 hectares of the provincial capital and regions of Helmand Province will be cultivated with seed cotton. Quoting a source at the Department of Agriculture and Land Reform of Helmand Province, a BIA correspondent writes that the seed cotton production of cotton growers during 1364 [which began 21 March] has been anticipated at 23,500 tons. The source added that, during the spring campaign of the current year, in order to help the cotton growers and raise the level of cotton production, 7,769 tons of chemical fertilizer and other material and technical assistance will be provided. Also, the production of the Bost enterprise will be given to the cotton growers free of charge through the enterprise.

The source adds that, in order to provide cultivation wheat, 1,000 tons of wheat will be purchased from farmers and, after processing, will be redistributed to farmers for autumn cultivation. The source added that, during the current year, an area of 1,440 jeribs will be distributed to 280 landless peasants free of charge. Also, a total of 27,161 tons of chemical fertilizer and 600 tons of cultivation wheat as well as pesticides and insecticides valued at 7,209 million afghanis will also be distributed to peasants, gardeners, and livestock breeders in Helmand Province.

PAKISTAN

Delhi Reports Zia Withdraws Martial Law Duties

BK280315 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 28 Mar 85

[Text] The Pakistan president, General Ziaul Haq, has withdrawn all senior military officials from martial law duties. He has also issued directions that except for the cases concerning terrorist activities and other heinous crimes, all other crimes will be dealt with in civil courts.

Rajiv Gandhi Sends Congratulations to Junejo

BK271530 Karachi Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 27 Mar 85

[Text] Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi has congratulated Mohammad Khan Junejo on his assumption of the office of prime minister of Pakistan.

In a message today, he hoped the people of Pakistan would continue to march on the path of prosperity in the coming years under Mr Junejo's leadership.

Afghan Rebels Attack Airport, Soviets Retaliate

BK281028 Karachi Domestic Service in English 1005 GMT 28 Mar 85

[Text] Reports from Afghanistan say the mujahidin have conducted an attack on Qandahar airport, damaging a military plane and two Soviet helicopters. They also blasted a petrol tank. In retaliation, the Soviet-Karmal forces resorted to bombing of rural areas in Qandahar, killing 22 innocent civilians, including 2 women. Another report says the mujahidin raided a security post in Konduz Province, killing three Karmal troops.

Briefs

Aid for Afghan Refugees The FAO [Food & Agricultural Organization] has promised to provide 85,000 metric tons of wheat and 13,000 tons of edible oil as emergency aid during this year to meet the emergency needs of the Afghan refugees staying in Pakistan. With this, the total aid of the FAO through different sources to the Afghan refugees staying in Pakistan since January 1980 will be about $346.5 million. [Text] [*Karachi Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 25 Mar 85 BK*]

Air Chief Promoted The chief of the Air Staff, Air Marshal Jamal Ahmad Khan, has been promoted to the rank of Air Chief Marshal with effect from 23 March. [Text] [*Karachi Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 22 Mar 85 BK*]

SRI LANKA

Bhandari Meets With Jayewardene, Concludes Visit

BK271611 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 27 Mar 85

[Text] The 3-day high-level discussions between India and Sri Lanka ended today with the second meeting between President Jayewardene and the foreign secretary, Mr Romesh Bhandari. Mr Bhandari rounded off his trip with an informal luncheon meeting with the Sri Lankan president at Colombo, in which both sides showed great consideration to the points of view of each other on all issues, including the vexed Tamil problem. The All India Radio special correspondent, Praban Majumder, reports from Colombo that the visit of the foreign secretary to Sri Lanka and his wide-ranging talks with President Jayewardene and other leaders has created a better atmosphere in the relations between the two countries. Our correspondent says the present visit appears to have succeeded in steering through the main thrust on defusing the present situation in the island republic. Besides, the visit also attempted at consolidating and developing the traditional friendship and cooperation between the two nations.

Earlier in the day, Mr Bhandari separately called on the leader of the opposition in Sri Lanka, Mr Anura Bandaranaike, and the leader of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party, Mrs Sirimavo Bandaranaike. Later, Mr Bhandari left for home.

The Sri Lankan media, which has been giving much prominence to the present dialogue, said the need of the hour is creation of an atmosphere for positive negotiations on the Tamil issue. It also spoke of the new initiatives to be taken by the two countries for a meaningful headway toward resolving the problem.

Communique Issued on Visit

BK281104 Colombo International Service in English 1030 GMT 28 Mar 85

[Text] Sri Lanka and India have agreed that the settlement of Sri Lanka's ethnic problem should be within the framework of the unity, sovereignty, and integrity of Sri Lanka. A communique issued in Colombo at the end of Indian Foreign Secretary Romesh Bhandari's 3-day visit to the island also stated that the two countries agreed that as a first step it was necessary to stop all acts of violence in order to create an atmosphere conducive to the resumption of a political dialogue. The two countries have also agreed to take all possible measures to work toward an enduring settlement which should be acceptable to all sections of the Sri Lankan people.

The Indian foreign secretary assured the Sri Lankan leaders that India was opposed to all forms of violence and it was India's desire to see a united, stable, and prosperous Sri Lanka. It was agreed that steps should be taken to improve communications and travel facilities between the two countries. The practice of regular consultation at official level on bilateral and regional matters is also to be maintained.

Mr Bhandari, during his 3-day official visit to Sri Lanka, called on President Jayewardene; Prime Minister Premadasa; Foreign Minister Shahul Hameed; the minister of national security, Lalith Athulathmudali; Home Affairs Minister K.W. Devanayagam, and the Minister S. Thondaman.

The communique issued by the Foreign Ministry stated that the discussions were frank and useful. The high commissioners of Sri Lanka and India in Colombo and New Delhi were also associated in these discussions. They also discussed a wide renage of issues related to international, regional, bilateral, and other matters of mutual interest.

Delhi on Communique

BK270404 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 28 Mar 85

[Text] India and Sri Lanka have agreed that as a first step toward solving the ethnic problem in the island, it is necessary to bring about a halt to all acts of violence and create an atmosphere conducive to the resumption of a political dialogue. A communique issued in Colombo at the end of the foreign secretary, Mr Romesh Bhandari's 3-day talks with the Sri Lankan leaders said that both the countries are of the view that all possible measures should be taken for an enduring settlement acceptable to all sections of people of Sri Lanka. It should be within the framework of the unity, sovereignty, and integrity of Sri Lanka.

The communique said Mr Bhandari had assured the Sri Lankan leaders that India is opposed to all forms of violence and it is her desire to see a united, stable, and prosperous Sri Lanka. Our correspondent, Praban Majumber, reports that both sides have agreed that steps should be taken to improve communication and travel facilities between the two countries. Regular consultations at official level and bilateral and regional matters should also be maintained.

Besharati Lists Conditions for Ending War

LD271755 Tehran IRNA in English 1740 GMT 27 Mar 85

[Text] Tehran, March 27 IRNA — Iran demands the elimination of the Iraqi regime, dlrs 350 billion in war reparations and the return of 200,000 Iraqi refugees to their homeland as the conditions for ending the imposed war, said Iran's First Deputy Foreign Minister 'Ali Mohammad Besharati.

In an interview with the English daily *TEHRAN TIMES* today he said the first condition is to identify and punish the aggressor. "The identification and trial means the elimination of the Ba'thist regime in Baghdad," he said.

He said the second condition was for the aggressor to pay war reparations. "According to our estimates, the Islamic Republic...demands payment of 350 billion dlrs in war damages."

The paper quoted Besharati as saying that the third condition to end the 45 month war is the return of over 200,000 expelled Iraqis back to their homeland. He said over 200,000 respectable Iraqis who have lost whatever they had in their country were now living in Iran as refugees. Besharati said one of the earlier terms of Iran to end the war which was to vacate the Iranian land has been omitted from the list.

Iraq occupies 1,000 sq. km of Iranian soil while Iran holds 700-800 sq. km of Iraqi land, according to the deputy foreign Minister. He said all areas of Iraq held by Iran are strategically important and that the Islamic forces will soon throw out the aggressive forces from Iranian soil.

Iraq occupied 22,000 sq. km of Iranian land in its initial offensive in September 1980, but was forced to retreat under "heroic offensive by the Islamic forces," he said.

UN Secretary General Makes Statement on War

LD271748 Tehran IRNA in English 1549 GMT 27 Mar 85

[Text] Tehran, March 27, IRNA — U.N. Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar has deplored threats against commercial air and marine traffic as well as Iraq's continued deployment of lethal chemical weapons against the Iranian forces. In a communique published by the U.N. secretary general on Tuesday, the U.N. official has regretted an escalation of hostile operations and threats against commercial shipping and air traffic as a result of the Iraq-Iran war.

The U.N. secretary general has also called for an immediate halt in the deployment of chemical and toxic weapons. He said in the communique that on the strength of reports reaching him from Vienna and London the Baghdad government has continued to employ chemical weapons in the war with Iran.

On 12 June 1984 Baghdad agreed to discontinue attacks upon civilian and residential areas in Iran. Shortly after, however, the Iraqi Government resumed its attacks upon housing areas in Iran eventually leading to retaliatory attacks by the Islamic government.

The Islamic government has repeatedly called on international organizations to force the ruling government in Baghdad to observe the 1925 protocol and international conventions banning war operations on civilian areas in Iran, but the Baghdad government has not positively responded to such moves by Iran.

Iran Willing To Cooperate

LD271938 Tehran IRNA in English 1920 GMT 27 Mar 85

[Text] Tehran, March 27, IRNA — The Islamic Republic said Wednesday it is prepared to cooperate with the United Nations to stop violations of international law in the Iraqi war but again reserved the right of retaliation.

The Iranian Foreign Ministry said in a statement the expression of concern by the U.N. secretary general over violations of international law in the Iraq-Iran war could be effective in preventing them, despite that he had not singled out Iraq as the violator.

Javier Perez de Cuellar issued a statement Tuesday expressing regret and concern over attacks on residential areas, commercial ships, the use of chemical weapons by Iraq and the latter's threats against commercial planes flying in Iranian airspace.

The Foreign Ministry said Iran began retaliating Iraqi attacks on Iranian cities only after losing hope in the international community to halt Iraqi aggressions.

It added "despite the intensification of Iraqi attacks on the cities of the Islamic Republic in recent weeks and days, Iran is still committed to the (June 12) agreement and will be committed to its strict implementation if the agreement is observed by the Iraqi regime."

The statement reaffirmed Iran's commitment not to use chemical weapons and not to attack commercial ships in the Persian Gulf. "The Islamic Republic is not willing to endanger the lives of innocent passengers (in commercial planes over Iraq), even in the position of retaliation."

"Nevertheless, the Islamic Republic of Iran, while preserving the right of firm retaliation in case of continued violations and crimes by the Iraqi regime, welcomes the U.N. secretary general's statement. It once again expresses its readiness to cooperate with the secretary general in order to prevent the breach of international principles and law."

Meanwhile in an interview with a reporter of the Persian daily *KAYHAN* in New York, the Iranian ambassador to the United Nations, Rajaie-khorasani, said that much as the communique had addressed Iran and Iraq and called on both of them to discontinue attacks on residential areas and neutral ships in the Persian Gulf, it was, in view of the international customs, in effect directed towards the Baghdad government rather than towards Iran.

He reminded that the communique had explicitly said that based on reliable reports from London and Vienna hospitals the Iraqi Government had deployed lethal chemical weapons in the war

and that the communique by the U.N. secretary general deplored and condemned such instances of violations of the international conventions.

He commented that in his opinion the communique by the U.N. secretary general had served as a serious warning to the Baghdad regime. He said also that as representative of the Islamic Republic to the United Nations he agrees with the communique.

Ministry Replies to Statement

LD280754 Tehran IRNA in English 0742 GMT 28 Mar 85

[Text] Tehran, March 28, IRNA — The Ministry of Foreign Affairs in a statement issued here Wednesday night, announced its stance concerning the Tuesday statement of the U.N. Secretary General, Javier Perez de Cuellar in which he had asked both warring countries to halt attacks on residential areas.

The statement has drawn attention of the U.N. secretary general to the following points:

1- The Islamic Republic of Iran has always respected international laws and regulations and has proved this through its conduct.

2- Although the U.N. statement has failed to mention the Iraqi regime as the regime which has violated the June 12, 1984 U.N. agreement calling for a halt on attacks on residential areas, which has attacked commercial ships in the Persian Gulf, which has deployed chemical weapons, has threatened safety of commercial airlines, the statement could be effective in preventing continuation of violations and decreasing outcome of such violations.

3- The Islamic Republic of Iran in the course of the Iraqi imposed war, despite its ability to reciprocate to the Iraqi attacks on Iranian civilian areas, has refrained from such retaliatory actions. However, in the absence of any international measure to make the Iraqi regime to stop attacking civilian areas in Iran, in isolated cases, and with prior notice, Iran has carried out retaliatory measures.

The Islamic Republic of Iran welcomed the June 12 agreement of the U.N., and acted accordingly. Despite escalation of Iraqi attacks on Iranian cities in recent weeks, Iran once again expresses its readiness to observe the agreement granted that Iraq did the same.

4- Despite the fact that Iran is capable of retaliating to the Iraqi deployment of chemical weapons, it has respected the U.N. calls and refrained from using such toxic chemicals in warfronts and will continue to observe U.N. regulations.

5- Iran has made a firm commitment to ensure safety of navigation in the Persian Gulf waters. However, the Iraqi regime in attacking ships intends to spread the war to the Persian Gulf waters.

6- The Iraqi threats on commercial marine traffic violate recognised international regulations including the Montreal, and The Hague conventions. Such threats [illegible] worst kind of crimes of the Iraqi regime. The Islamic Republic of Iran will never take a retaliatory measure in this respect which would endanger lives of the innocent passengers.

7- The experience has shown that the Iraqi regime does not have the minimum respect for international laws and regulations and humanitarian values and has shamelessly breached its commitments. However, the Islamic Republic of Iran while preserving itself the right to retaliate for continuous Iraqi violations, announces its readiness to cooperate with the U.N. to prevent violation of international regulations and principles.

8- The Islamic Republic of Iran hopes that the U.N. secretary general and other bodies of the U.N., within the Charter of the organisation and by employing all its possible means, would make the Iraqi regime to observe and implement international laws, regulations and humanitarian principles.

U N Envoy Welcomes Statement

LD281023 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0430 GMT 28 Mar 85

[Text] Rajaie-Khorasani, permanent representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations, welcomed the recent statement by the U.N. secretary general as positive and constructive and expressed hope that the Security Council will follow up the secretary general's measures and put pressure on the Iraqi regime to prevent that regime's attacks on residential areas.

In an interview with IRNA he reiterated the contents of that statement with regard to condemnation of every violation of international law and convention, particularly the use of chemical weapons, striking at commercial shipping, threatening the security of air traffic, and the bombing of civilian areas. He said: "I think this step by the U.N. secretary general is positive and constructive." He added: "The statement is constructive from two standpoints. One, it has exposed certain facts about the Saddam regime and the crimes he is perpetrating, demonstrating that that regime is constantly violating international law. And [illegible] shows that international conventions must be carried out and observed and cannot be subject to discussions, disputes, and [illegible]."

Rajaie-Khorasani then referred to the importance of again condemning the use of chemical weapons, and said: "An extremely important point in that statement is the condemnation of the use of chemical weapons. It is also an oblique reference to the fact that Iraq has used such weapons, and therefore that statement makes it unnecessary to send an investigating mission because an official stance against their use has been adopted."

He [illegible] emphasized the secretary general's contacts with the [illegible] officials that recently limited Iranian commanders' [illegible] reference to attacks on commercial and [illegible] residential areas, and efforts to prevent [illegible] continuation of such actions, all of which have [illegible] Rajaie-Khorasani [illegible] U.N. Security Council.

With regard to the UN secretary general's hope for a speedy end to the war, he said: Our war is a defensive one and as long as aggression continues we are forced to continue our defense. He emphasized: In principle we do not want this war because it was imposed on us. Therefore, we desire its end. He added: With regard to ending the war, we and the secretary general are of the same opinion. But the conditions we have declared for ending the war and which we presented to the United Nations are at variance with his views.

It is axiomatic that as long as the just rights of the Iranian nation are not secured and the aggressor is not punished for his deeds the war will continue. And if the United Nations or the Security Council does not specify and condemn the aggressor, how can they expect to play a positive role in securing the other conditions of the Islamic Republic of Iran and end the dispute?

The Iranian representative to the UN said with regard to the Iraqi reaction to the secretary general's statement: We think that Iraq's insane actions are being censured in that statement and I think that Iraq, as a result of the recent attacks launched by the combatants of Islam, has been terrified because, first, it has lost a great many men. Second, the array of its forces west and east of the Tigris River has been totally disrupted. And third, as *THE WASHINGTON POST* recently wrote, even Washington itself has been terrified by these attacks by the Islamic combatants.

Rajaie-Khorasani added: Therefore, the fear and anxiety reigning in Baghdad are extremely high. They thought that with a series of comprehensive military moves, without taking into consideration moral and international relations, they could put pressure on the Islamic Republic of Iran. Fortunately, they failed to achieve their goal in that phase.

Therefore, the actions now carried out by Iraq stem from despondency and insane moves which are totally unrestrained. In my opinion, this state of affairs demonstrates the extremely disorderly military and political situation of the Saddam regime, and it is natural that the Baghdad regime should be uncomfortable and angry with a statement that condemns its unlawful and wrong moves.

Tehran Bombing, Operations Against Iraq Reported

Iraqi Jets Forced To Retreat

LD271647 Tehran IRNA in English 1943 GMT 27 Mar 85

[Text] Tehran, March 27, IRNA — Iraqi jets violated the airspace of Qazvin, Zanjan, Hamadan, Khorramabad, Boruierd, Gilan-e Gharb, Sar-e Pol-e Zahab today.

The enemy jets were forced to retreat due to intense Iranian anti-aircraft fire.

A number of houses and shops were destroyed in the attacks on Gilan-e Gharb and Sar-e Pol-e Zahab (at 07:32:10 GMT) and 11:30 (8:00 GMT). No casualties [illegible] reported.

Communique No 2,055

LD271849 Tehran IRNA in English 1820 GMT 27 Mar 85

[Text] Tehran, March 27 IRNA — In retaliation for Iraqi aerial and artillery attacks on Iranian residential areas, the artillery unity of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic and the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) targetted military and economic installations in Iraqi port of Basra inflicting heavy losses, Joint Staff Command Communique No. 2055 issued today said.

The communique also added that an Iraqi offensive was squashed in the southern operational regions near Hoseyniyeh Tuesday [26 March]. An Iraqi unit, supported by artillery and mortar fire launched an offensive at 04:30 (01:00 GMT) today but was forced to flee, sustaining over 50 killed and a large number wounded.

In Arvand River fronts two group bunkers of the enemy were demolished west of the river and a number of Iraqi soldiers were killed or wounded, said the communique.

In the western and northwestern operational fronts Tuesday, Iraqi activities were halted in Sardasht forcing a number of enemy tanks to retreat when they were subjected to the heavy fire of Islamic defenders in Sumar region. The engineering activities of the enemy were stopped in Mehran, Halaleh and Qasr-e Shirin.

Iraqi air aggressions upon the cities of Zanjan and Qazvin (Zanjan Pr.), Khorramabad (Lorestan Pr.), Marivan, Bijar (Kordestan Pr.), Kashan (Central Pr.) and Hamadan (Hamadan Pr.) were thwarted by the anti-aircraft units and tactical measures of Iranian jet fighters.

Several Iraqi aircraft violated the airspace of Tehran at 02:30 Wednesday (23:00 GMT Tuesday) and fired rockets on a housing unit, as a result of which three civilians were martyred and five others wounded.

The western cities of Gilan-e Gharb and Sar-e Pol-e Zahab were also air raided by Iraqi planes at 10:30 and 10:32 today (07:00 and 07:02 hours GMT) during which some housing units were damaged.

Several houses and shops were damaged in Abadan Tuesday as a result of Iraqi long-range heavy fire upon the city. Also some parts of Khorramshah were hit by Iraqi artillery during this period, concluded the communique.

Tehran Bombing Kills 10

LD271957 Tehran IRNA in English 1955 GMT 27 Mar 85

[Text] Tehran, March 27 IRNA — At least 10 people were martyred and 50 others wounded (until 23:00 hours local time, 19:30 GMT) as an intruding Iraqi plane bombarded a civil area in Dowlat-Abad, in southern Tehran at 21:25 (17:55 GMT) Wednesday.

The area hit by the Iraqi plane is said to be Arab inhabited. Reports also indicate that a four storey building has been com-

pletely rased and another damaged 50 percent. A number of other houses have also been partially damaged.

Another Iraqi attack on the southern region of Tehran in the midnight Tuesday left nine people martyred and 14 others wounded.

Hamadan, Qom, Kashan Attack Repelled

LD272024 Tehran IRNA in English 2020 GMT 27 Mar 85

[Text] Tehran, March 27, IRNA — An Iraqi aircraft violated the airspace of three Iranian cities but was repelled by anti-aircraft fire. The aircraft penetrated the airspace of Hamadan, Qom and Kashan at 9:15 pm (17:45 GMT), 9:34 pm (18:04 GMT) and 9:50 pm (18:20 GMT) respectively.

Heavy anti-aircraft fire repelled the enemy aircraft, which only broke the sound barrier over Qom at very high altitude.

Operations Against Iraq Reported

GF280446 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0330 GMT 28 Mar 85

[Text] In retaliation for the attacks by Iraqi aircraft on Iranian cities, the artillery of the Islamic Republican Army and the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps shelled Iraqi cities along the southern borders beginning yesterday morning.

According to the communique of the Army Joint Staff, the Central News Unit and IRNA, the economic and industrial installations of Basra, Abol Khasib, Zubayr, Faw, Tamamah, Shidi, and Ziyadiyah located in Basra Province were pounded by the artillery of the soldiers of Islam. The shelling in Basra Province and along the main Faw-Basra, Basra-Nasiriyeh, Basra-Tamamah, and Basra-Al-Amarah roads severed contact between the 3d and 4th Iraqi armies south of Al-Amarah and east of Basra the supply lines of these two armies faced great difficulties.

The report added that Islamic combatants now control all the suburbs of Basra and have directed their shelling mostly on military and economic targets, the governorate general building, the security department buildings, the office of the Ba'th Party Basra branch, port, shipping and coast guard headquarters, and the telecommunications.

Tehran Death Toll Reaches 27

LD280520 Tehran IRNA in English 0449 GMT 28 Mar 85

[Text] Tehran, March 28, IRNA — Death toll of the latest Iraqi bombardment of south-eastern part of Tehran as of 01:00 am local time (09:30 GMT) [as received] is reported to be 19 martyred and 199 wounded. Two Iraqi jet fighters bombarded several residential neighbourhoods in south-eastern Tehran at 24:25 hours local time (17:55 GMT) Wednesday night. In this attack, several homes have completely been destroyed and a number of others have been damaged.

Immediately after the attack ambulances and relief teams rushed to the site of the incident to help the victims. Those wounded have been taken to hospitals in Tehran, 10 of whom are reported to be in critical condition.

People of the area who gathered to help the victims were chanting slogans in support of Imam Khomeyni and also the slogan of "War, war, till victory."

130 Dead in Baghdad Attack

LD280830 Tehran IRNA in English 0825 GMT 28 Mar 85

[Text] Damascus, March 28, IRNA — At least some 130 Iraqi military personnel have been killed in the fifth Iranian missile attack on the Iraqi capital of Baghdad Monday. The Iranian surface-to-surface missile hit a five-story building in Baghdad and destroyed it completely.

Diplomatic sources here believe that the destruction caused by the fifth Iranian missile was far greater than the previous ones. They added that at least 20 of the military personnel killed were majors and colonels.

Iran fired its sixth missile on Baghdad Wednesday in retaliation for the repeated Iraqi bombardment of Iranian cities including the capital city of Tehran.

Iraqi Planes Hit 5 Cities

LD280925 Tehran IRNA in English 0915 GMT 28 Mar 85

[Text] Tehran, March 28, IRNA — The intruding Iraqi warplanes Thursday [28 March] violated air space of Piranshah in West Azarbayjan Province, the East Azarbayjan capital of Tabriz, Esfahan in Esfahan Province, Baneh in Kordistan Province, and Ilam and its Salehabad District in Ilam Province.

The Iranian anti-aircraft units chased away the Iraqi planes from Piranshah and Esfahan. However, a number of people are reported to have been martyred or wounded as a result of air attacks on Baneh, Ilam and Salehabad District.

Casualties Reported in Raid

LD281131 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 28 Mar 85

[Text] As a result of today's Iraqi air raid on residential areas of Baneh, 10 people were martyred and 40 injured. At 0930 today, residential areas in Ilam came under enemy air attack, resulting in 5 dead and 17 injured. Moreover, following the bombing of Salehabad by Iraqi planes, four people were martyred and a number of others wounded.

Yesterday night Khorramabad, Zanjan, and Bushehr came under Iraqi air attack. However, the Iraqi planes were forced to flee after appropriate measures were taken by the air defense. This morning's air raid by Iraqi planes on Tabriz and Esfahan was also repulsed.

Effect of Badr Operation Noted

LD281215 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 28 Mar 85

[Unattributed commentary]

[Excerpt] The victory of Islamic combatants in the Badr operation has resulted in a wave of gratification among the admirers of the Islamic revolution in the Middle East. The smashing of the defensive lines of the Zionist Saddam regime by means of the Badr operation made the vulnerability of this Zionist regime abundantly clear.

According to political observers, the smashing of the Iraqi Army defensive lines on the eastern sector of the Tigris River and the occupation of the Hawr al-Azim region by the Islamic combatants once again proved that the United States can no longer pin its hopes on the future of Saddam's regime.

The fact is that the victorious Badr operation threw the foundations of political equations into disarray in the region. On the whole, they culminated in the consolidation of the "Steadfastness Front" to counter the Zionist enemy. These operations also weakened the Iraq-Jordan-Israel axis.

Commentary on Iraqi Conditions

LD281211 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 28 Mar 85

[Unattributed commentary]

[Excerpt] Our country's officials responsible for military affairs again emphatically declare, as they have often declared: The launching of missiles at Baghdad is a deterrent against the crimes perpetrated by the Zionists ruling in Iraq. We have never wanted, nor do we want, to destroy residential areas under any circumstances. As soon as Saddam's acts of wickedness cease, our retaliation in kind will also come to an end.

According to IRNA, latest reports from inside Basra say that as a result of the resumption of the massive shelling of Iraq's southern regions, Basra's grain store and the Iraqi Army's command center in that city were hit by several artillery shells. As a result, the two targets sustained heavy damage.

According to reports reaching us, the thunderous explosion of Iranian heavy artillery shells does not stop for a moment in the city of Basra and the area surrounding it and the military of the Iraqi regime, positioned behind massive sand-bag barriers in the city's squares are preventing the exodus of the remainder of the city's inhabitants.

Reports also say that Muslim Iraqi revolutionaries and deserting soldiers from the Iraqi Army, deployed in certain parts of southern Iraq, mounted coordinated operations 2 weeks ago against an Iraqi Army center in the marshes and killed the troops manning that center.

In another report, according to an eye-witness account, following the killing and wounding of vast numbers of Iraqi troops during the Badr operations, Iraqi Army officials tried to conceal their heavy losses during these operations by perpetrating another heinous crime; they buried gravely wounded Iraqi soldiers together with the bodies of dead soldiers. According to these eye-witnesses accounts, by order of Iraqi Army officials wounded Iraqi soldiers who had been transferred to a field hospital near Al-'Uzayr, south of Al-'Amarah behind the battlefronts, were buried in pits dug near the field hospital together with the bodies of dead Iraqi Army soldiers.

Khomeyni, IRGC Minister Discuss Military Supplies

LD281102 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 28 Mar 85

[Text] Mr Mohsen Rafiqdust, minister of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps, was received in audience this morning by Imam Khomeyni, leader of the Islamic Revolution and commander in chief of the Armed Forces. The IRGC minister presented a report on important progress achieved by the corps' military industries and also on the excellent supply situation on the front.

During the meeting, the hope of the world [Khomeyni], expressing appreciation for all those involved in the military industries, graciously commanded: All brains should be enlisted so that we can build whatever we may need. God is with you, and this is the greatest backing!

Musavi Chairs Cabinet Session, War Discussed

GF280900 Tehran International Service in Arabic 0700 GMT 28 Mar 85

[Text] The Cabinet held its first meeting in the new year yesterday under Prime Minister Mir Hoseyn Musavi. The Cabinet listened to a report from Mohsen Rafiqdust, minister of Islamic Revolution Guards Corps, in which he reviewed the victories scored during the victorious Badr operation. He asserted that these operations resulted in the killing and wounding of more than 12,000 Ba'thist forces, and that the 65th and 66th Brigades of the Commando Forces, on which Saddam relies more than others, were completely annihilated.

PDRY Prime Minister Comments on Iran War Policy

LD272009 Tehran IRNA in English 1930 GMT 27 Mar 85

[Text] Tehran, March 27, IRNA — Prime Minister of People's Democratic Republic of Yemen Haydar Abu Bakr Wednesday received a message from his Iranian counterpart Mir Hoseyn Musavi and said his country approves Iranian policy regarding recent developments in the imposed Iraqi war.

The message was handed to Abu Bakr by Iranian Ambassador in Aden Hasan Aminian who spoke on the developments of the war and Iraq's bombardment of civilian areas. Abu Bakr said his government approved the stance of the Islamic Republic regarding the war. "We know who started the war," he said.

"The People's Democratic Republic of Yemen calls for the observance of the June 12 agreement," he said.

The treaty brokered by the UN secretary general temporarily halted the bombardment of civilian targets in both Iran and Iraq. The Islamic Republic has repeatedly called for the re-observance of the agreement but Iraq has refused to accept the offer.

Prime Minister Abu Bakr said his country has a clear policy towards the Islamic Republic because the Islamic revolution toppled the biggest imperialist base in the region and created support for nations in the region.

"We shall be witnessing great expansion of bilateral ties (between Iran and South Yemen) in the future," he said.

Ambassador Aminian said Iraq repeatedly violated the June 12 agreement by bombarding residential areas. Another violation of international law was Iraq's repeated use of chemical weapons.

He said the Islamic Republic was forced to retaliate Iraqi attacks on Iranian cities. "We had saved our weapons and missiles for war against the Zionists."

"Our people are very patient but they defend themselves when faced with oppression" Aminian said.

Khamene'i Receives Polish Envoy's Credentials

LD272139 Tehran IRNA in English 1255 GMT 27 Mar 85

[Text] Tehran, March 27, IRNA — President Khamene'i Wednesday told the new Polish ambassador in Tehran that Iran had established friendly relations with Poland and other East European countries and hopes to expand them. The Polish envoy, Tadeusz Kohorewicz, presented his credentials to the president.

Khamene'i said the former Iranian regime was very dependent on the United States but as a result of the Islamic revolution the political perspective had broadened. Kohorewicz said his government appreciated and supported Iran's acceptance of the United Nations proposal to halt attacks on non-military targets. The people follow the progress and deep social and political developments in Iran with great interest, he added.

The Islamic Republic has diplomatic ties with most countries except the United States, occupied Palestine, South Africa, Egypt, Jordan and Morocco.

Khamene'i Briefed on Envoy's Efforts Abroad

LD271313 Tehran IRNA in English 1600 GMT 27 Mar 85

[Text] Tehran, March 27, IRNA — President 'Ali Khamene'i Wednesday was briefed on the recent dispatch of envoys to the United Nations and nine Asian and North African states to explain Iran's policy on the imposed war.

He was briefed by Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati and six of his deputies, who visited Libya, Algeria, Syria, Pakistan, India, United Arab Emirates, South Yemen, Japan, China and the United Nations. Khamene'i said the Foreign Ministry should continue diplomatic efforts in this regard.

Velayati Receives Message From Syrian Envoy

LD272057 Tehran IRNA in English 2011 GMT 27 Mar 85

[Text] Tehran, March 27 IRNA — Syrian ambassador to the Islamic Republic, Ibrahim al-Yunis submitted a written message of the Syrian foreign minister, Faruq al-Shar' to his Iranian counterpart, Dr. 'Ali Akbar Velayati here today.

Mutual relations between the two countries as well as the current developments of the Iraqi imposed war were discussed during this meeting.

ICO Called on To Prevent Chemical Weapon Use

LD272052 Tehran IRNA in English 1935 GMT 27 Mar 85

[Text] Tehran, March 27, IRNA — In a letter addressed to secretary general of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, Sharifudin Pirzada, Iran's foreign minister Dr. 'Ali Akbar Velayati today called on the organization to take effective measures for preventing the Iraqi Government from its continued deployment of toxic and chemical weapons in the war with Iran.

The Iranian foreign minister reminded the organization's secretary general that on several other occasions earlier on he had called on the OIC to use its good offices for ensuring that civilians and housing quarters are immune from war operations, and noted that despite his expectations the organization had not taken his pleas as seriously as it was expected to.

Dr. Velayati expressed hope that the organization "would fulfill its responsibilities in this relation", but noted flatly that the Islamic government would retaliate fiercely against the Baghdad government should it continue to engage in war crimes against the Islamic Republic.

Envoy Condemns World Silence on Iraqi Attacks

LD280024 Tehran IRNA in English 0731 GMT 27 Mar 85

[Text] Rome, March 27, IRNA — The Iranian ambassador to Rome, Gholam 'Ali Heydari-Khachpur in a press conference here Tuesday condemned silence of the international organisations and Western countries towards the Iraqi attacks on Iranian cities and its continuous violation of international regulations.

Referring to a recent speech of Imam Khomeyni that Iran had not started the war, was not interested in continuing it but will not give in to an ignominous peace, the Iranian ambassador reiterated determination of the Iranian people to reach final victory in the war and eradicate the Iraqi regime.

On repeated Iraqi attacks on Iranian cities which has been escalated since early March, he said that the Iranian officials more than a dozen times, have announced their willingness to halt attacks on cities.

However, he pointed out, silence of the international organizations and Western countries, has made the Iraqi regime bolder to intensify its attacks on Iranian residential areas.

The long list of Iraqi violations of international regulations, he added, includes, repeated missile and aerial attacks on Iranian cities, hitting Iran's offshore oil wells, creating difficulties for traffic of commercial ships in Persian Gulf, deploying chemical weapons, torturing Iranian POW's, threatening safety of commercial airlines, harassing Iraqis inside Iraq and many more.

In another part of the conference he said that the Islamic Republic of Iran could no longer tolerate the silence of countries which claim to be supporting international laws.

On the casualty rate of the recent wave of Iraqi attacks on Iranian cities, he said that more than 2,500 civilians have been martyred.

Kuwait 'Harassing, Arresting' Iraqi Nationals

LD280740 Tehran IRNA in English 0552 GMT 28 Mar 85

[Text] Tehran, March 28, IRNA — The Kuwaiti Government is harassing and arresting Iraqi nationals employed in the country's private sector. The moves are being carried out in collaboration with the Iraqi regime. The Iraqis are reportedly handed over to the Baghdad government to meet the manpower shortage at the war fronts, in a war that the Baghdad rulers have imposed on Iran.

The Iraqi mass media recently carried Saddam's general so-called amnesty offer in which all the opponents of the regime not incarcerated would be supposedly pardoned. However, response to the offer by the opposition was reported to be nil to minimum.

Reports from Kuwait indicate that security forces are raiding the houses of Iraqi expatriate workers in that country and arresting them. They are then turned over to Iraqi officials at Abdeli border strip. A group of Iraqis working at a Kuwaiti contract company were arrested on March 13 and were handed over to Iraqi authorities at the border the next day. The reports indicate that the property of the expelled persons is confiscated. Presently the 200,000 Iraqis in Kuwait are living in a state of panic and fear.

KEYHAN Views 'Power Struggle' for Premiership

GF261632 London KEYHAN in Persian 21 Mar 85 p 16

[Text] Two ministers from Mir Hoseyn Musavi's Cabinet have been removed from their posts during the past 2 weeks. The removal of Mohammad Taqi Banki, minister in charge of the plan and budget organization, one of the few so-called technocrats in the Islamic government, was predictable.

Banki is a candidate for the seat of the prime minister and is being supported by the speaker of the Majlis, Hashemi-Rafsanjani, and it was likely that the Khamene'i-Musavi axis would somehow foil this attempt. The budget discussions at the Majlis gave this opportunity to Musavi.

In reality, all the sharp criticisms on the "inadequacy" of the budget, the imbalanced figures, and apathy toward the priorities of the nation brought up by the Majlis deputies were in fact leveled against Banki and had little other purpose. When Banki left the budget commission angrily 2 weeks ago, many expected that he would soon leave.

The most important faction in the Majlis that attacked Banki were those in favor of an open economy and the supporters of the bazaar who were very disturbed by some of the semisocialist programs mentioned in next year's budget.

Placing Banki in the post of minister in charge of the foundation of the oppressed housing and development department indicates that Musavi wished to remove all chances of Banki becoming prime minister.

It is true that 4 years ago one could become a prime minister after having served as editorial writer at the *JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI* newspaper, but today one must be at least a minister before becoming prime minister.

In the meantime the resignation last Tuesday of Nejad-Hoseynian, minister of roads and transport, indicates that a major house-cleaning is in progress in the government before the new year holidays.

Keeping in mind that the minister of roads is also in the clique of the Majlis speaker, it is possible that other members of this axis serving in the Cabinet may also be removed from their positions.

Engineer Khamushi, deputy minister of roads, who is presently acting minister, has a better chance than others of becoming the minister.

Meanwhile, authoritative sources indicate that the attack by Khamane'i and Musavi's group against the supporters of the Majlis speaker will no doubt be followed by a counterattack.

According to these sources Hojjat-ol Eslam Hashemi-Rafsanjani will try within the next few weeks to gain the support of Ayatollah Khomeyni toward choosing one of his candidates for the post of prime minister.

The Majlis speaker has hinted in private meetings that the people are tired of the face of the prime minister and that the introduction of a new premier and a new face could change things to a certain extent.

At present, apart from Mohammad Taqi Banki, Iraj Fazel, ministerial education, and 'Ali Akbar Velayati, foreign minister, are considered to be among those whose candidacy for the premiership the Majlis speaker has proposed.

It must be made clear that since there are only a few months left until the new round of elections for the presidency, Seyyed 'Ali Khomene'i is determined to try his luck again to keep this position.

To keep the top position in the government is as important to Khamene'i as it is for Hashemi-Rafsanjani, his rival. Therefore, the power struggle between the two axes will undoubtedly increase within the next few months.

Tudeh Party Condemns Bombing of Civilian Areas

TA272033 (Clandestine) National Voice of Iran in Persian 1730 GMT 27 Mar 85

[Unattributed commentary: "The Devastating Calamities Stemming From the U.S.-Sponsored War"]

[Excerpts] Dear compatriots: In the new stage of the devastating war of attrition, which began with the renewed bombing of the defenseless people of the towns of the two countries, about 30,000 Iranian youths, teenagers, children, and adults were rolled in dust and blood. Thousands of our compatriots have become homeless, and once more great economic and financial losses have been inflicted on the country and nation of Iran.

The regime's lying and treacherous rulers are trying their utmost to conceal from our homeland's people the great and horrible defeat of Mr Khomeyni's forces of Islam in this war of attrition, as well as the death of about 30,000 Iranians, and the wounding and capture of thousands of others on the eve of the Nowruz feast. For this reason, without the slightest shame they talk about the alleged victory of Mr Khomeyni's Islamic forces in the devastating war, but which victory?

The grand caliph, without the least attention to the massacre of toiling and deprived people, and the homelessness of thousands of Iranian families, in his Nowruz message again spoke about his decisive decision to continue the war until Saddam is eliminated. Our homeland's anguished people once again saw and realized that this devastating war is nothing more but a war between Khomeyni and Saddam, and that all this massacre, destruction, homelessness, poverty, and misfortune is only for the sake of achieving the Velayat-e Faqih's wish to establish Khomeyni's fascist- theocratic regime in Iraq.

In connection with the start of the new stage of the war of attrition, and anticipating the great calamity that will befall the Iranian nation and country as a result of the war's protraction and escalation, the Iranian Tudeh Party Central Committee issued a statement on the eve of the Nowruz feast condemning this devastating war and calling for its immediate termination.

The statement by the Iranian Tudeh Party Central Committee begins as follows: The war between Iran and Iraq has entered a new and dangerous stage with the extensive bombardment of the large towns of the two countries. During the last several days the cities of Tehran, Tabriz, Abadan, Esfahan, Rasht, Kerman shah, Zanjan, Piranshahr, Khoramabad, Karand, Ilam, Gilan-e Gharb, and Sanandaj in Iran, and the equally large towns in Iraq, have been subjected to aerial and rocket attacks by the belliger ent sides. The victims of this obvious crime are thousands of innocent citizens who are rendered homeless in the two neighboring countries. Moreover, with renewed large-scale attacks on the war's fronts, thousands of other people will be added to the hundreds of thousands of the war's dead and maimed.

The Iranian Tudeh Party, condemning the commencement of the bombardment of defenseless towns by the Iraqi regime, as well as the retaliatory act by the regime of the Islamic Republic in this connection, demands the immediate cessation of aerial bombings, a cease-fire at the fronts, and the start of talks aimed at ending a futile and destructive war that only benefits imperial ism, and foremost of all warmongering U.S. imperialism, and which has achieved and continues to achieve nothing for the people of Iran and Iraq except death, destruction, and homele ness. This is the demand of the decisive majority of our [illegible] land's people.

The statement by the Iranian Tudeh Party Central Committee continues: As long as it concerned the defense of their homeland, Iran — the Iranian people — rushed to the fronts with selflessness and drove the aggressor from their soil. But the Iranian people are no longer ready to sacrifice their lives and property for the aggressive aims of reactionary rulers — pre sented under the guise of confrontation with so-called blasphemy and defense of so-called Islam. Our people demand an end to the war, and are fighting for this end.

In order to triumph in this just battle, one must employ the various current struggles, such as slow-downs in government organizations and industrial institutions, the refusal of mothers to send their children to the slaughterhouses, the refusal to allegedly provide aid to the war fronts, spontaneous demonstrations, as well as other forms of struggle such as street demonstrations by mothers and children and mass strikes throughout the country. Only through massive and consistent combat can one save the lives of hundreds of thousands of Iranians from certain death, and the country from destruction and the war's horrible economic consequences.

[Signed] Iranian Tudeh Party Central Committee, 19 March 1985.

Yes, it is our homeland's people and these scores of million-strong Iranian workers who should take in their hands the cause of ending the war, and through a united and organized antiwar struggle terminate this great tragedy endangering the gains of the revolution.